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# ARCHEOLOGICAL TESTING

# OF DOCKSIDE II

# FORT SUMTER NATIONAL MONUMENT

by

Kenneth S. Wild

SOUTHEAST ARCHEOLOGICAL CENTER
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

January 1989

AUG 11 1989

# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SOUTHEAST ARCHEOLOGICAL CENTER
P. O. Box 2416
Tallahassee, Florida 32316

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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August 8, 1989

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Memorandum

To: Assistant Manager, Denver Service Center

From: Chief, Southeast Archeological Center

Subject: Distribution of Archeological Report

Enclosed for your collections is a copy of a report entitled "Archeological Testing of Dockside II, Fort Sumter National Monument," by Kenneth S. Wild of the Southeast Archeological Center.

The testing focused on locating and identifying any cultural resources, and determining the associations and significance of any evidence found. The data produced by this program does not appear to support a determination of eligibility for the National Register.

Richard D. Faust

Enclosure

# ARCHEOLOGICAL TESTING

# OF DOCKSIDE II

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by

Kenneth S. Wild

SOUTHEAST ARCHEOLOGICAL CENTER
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Archeological testing was conducted by Southeast Archeological Center personnel to determine the presence or absence of historic or prehistorically significant resources. Testing was done by backhoe; 163.4 linear meters of trench were excavated. The presence of an intact wharf system that post dated 1940 and a mid-nineteenth century structure were revealed by the testing. The wharf is just below the surface and was found to interlace throughout the northern section of the park property. The *in situ* remains of this facility are in an excellent state of preservation, but are not considered to have archeological or historical importance.

The site of an historic building was located in the southwest quadrant of the property. The location of the building, recovered artifacts, and the turpentine smell of the soil matrix suggested that the building was a naval stores structure recorded on an 1884 map. The building, located on what was then Marshall's Wharf, housed naval stores and turpentine. Activities dealing in naval stores and turpentine on Marshall Wharf were conducted between 1860 and 1897 (Reynolds 1987). The brick floor of the structure was encountered at approximately 1.5 meters below the surface. Above the floor were the burned wooden

remains of the building, which extended to about one meter below the surface.

Deposits above the structure consisted of modern fill with no historic importance. The presence of the fill will allow the proposed construction activity in the area to be conducted without impact to the building. The parking lot proposed for this area should have no adverse effect on the historic structure, provided that excavation does not exceed a depth of one meter.

Excavation of the test trenches was arbitrarily limited to 2 meters because of the dangers of wall collapse, and because the trenches flooded with water below this level. As a result the archeological testing did not exceed 2 meters or 6 1/2 feet, except in one location about 10 meters long in which the trench depth was taken to 3.35 meters. No artifacts or cultural manifestations were observed at this depth; however, little time was available for observation because of wall collapse. A black sandy deposit, interpreted to be original marsh muck, was encountered approximately 2 meters below the surface. It is recommended that any construction activities requiring excavation below 2 meters be monitored by an archeologist.

A surface reconnaissance recovered historic cultural materials on the mud flats from the existing gravity drain to the southern boundary. These materials probably represent trash disposal or items lost from what was the northeast end of Gadsdens Wharf. The presence of these materials may indicate that remains of this historic wharf, predating the American Revolution, may be located within the boundaries of the Campsen's property.

## Introduction

Fort Sumter National Monument plans to construct a tour boat docking facility, known as Dockside II, to replace the one located at Charleston's City Marina on the Ashley River. Plans for the property call for a National Park Service facility consisting of a visitor contact building, a parking lot and a dock to be constructed jointly with the South Carolina Marine Science Museum and a private restaurant.

The only previous archeological investigation was a surface reconnaissance conducted by SEAC archeologist Elizabeth A. Horvath on October 26, 1988. The purpose of her reconnaissance was to assess the land for future investigations. No attempt was made to provide an assessment of the cultural resources in the

area at that time. The proposal for the tour boat facility presented in "Master Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/ Environmental Assessment, Fort Sumter National Monument, South Carolina," September 1987, suggested that an historical study of the property be completed followed by archeological testing. The archeological testing was proposed for purposes of confirming the findings of the historic research and locating any unrecorded cultural resources such as prehistoric archeological sites. The "Historical Study, Fort Sumter National Monument, Dockside II, Charleston, South Carolina," by Clark G. Reynolds (1987), brought together the documentation of the historic background of the property. The report provided the basis for the preparation of the "Archeological Investigation Plan, Dockside II, Fort Sumter National Monument," (May 1988), which guided these research efforts.

The field investigations were limited to the National Park Service owned property. They consisted of monitoring the excavation of backhoe trenches and preparing maps, profiles, and photographs of all observations. This work was conducted under the direction of Kenneth S. Wild from December 6 through December 12, 1988, assisted by Doug Potter and Andrea Repp. It focused on locating and identifying cultural resources, recording the

stratigraphic data, and determining the associations and significance of any evidence found.

Environment

The property proposed for Dockside II is located within the city limits of Charleston, South Carolina. It is bounded by the intersection of Calhoun Street (Boundary Street until 1850) and Concord Street on the west, a marine supply warehouse and boatyard on the north, a highrise condominium complex on the south, and the Cooper River on east. The property is 8.88 acres in size; half (4.81 acres) is fast lands and the remaining 4.07 acres is submerged. The submerged property extends from the fast land to the channel of the Cooper River.

Prior to these investigations, the area was being used for a soccer field. It was known locally as the "Little Palee Soccer Field." The land is fairly level. The vegetation is mainly grasses except for scattered shrubs along the northern boundary and the shoreline. Ms. Horvath noted on her visit to the property that at one time some sort of irrigation system had been installed. This was evidenced by PVC pipes and sprinkler heads on the surface.

The level fast lands have an approximate elevation of 3.5 meters above low tide. From the edge of the water front to the west approximately 10 to 20 meters, there is a thick deposit of large concrete slabs. The level soccer field drops abruptly in this area to sea level. A gravity storm drain transects the southern one-third of the property from Calhoun Street and empties into the Cooper River. The drain line is a large concrete box approximately 2 meters wide.

In the northeast quadrant of the property, a derelict dock extends out into the Cooper River. At low tide, intertidal mud flats are exposed as are remnants of a shipway and piers in the form of pilings. Scattered throughout the mud flats are numerous rusted iron bars, piles of rivets, plates, drums, etc., that attest to previous shipbuilding activities in the area.

Background

People have occupied this region at least 14,000 years. However, sites dating from Paleo-Indian to the Archaic period along the coast are few, even though sea level was lower during the Pleistocene. Clark Reynolds (1987) indicates that the property became inundated later and remained so to, at least, 1704. Thus, it was probably "unconducive to human settlement." Lack of sites

on the coast dating to the Paleo Indian and Archaic periods may indicate a preference by these people towards the exploitation of inter-riverine environments over coastal (Brooks and Scurry, 1978).

Extensive exploitation of coastal resources began during the early Woodland period. Large shell middens in the region suggest that lifeways had become more sedentary. Migration had been reduced to a seasonal basis which allowed for efficient exploitation of both coastal and inland resources. Fired clay pottery, termed Deptford, was introduced during the Early Woodland period. During the Middle Woodland period, coastal sites became smaller with less shell and fewer artifacts. Numerous artifact scatters from this period have been found clustered along tidal creeks and marsh edges (Brooks and Scurry, 1978; Commonwealth Associates, Inc., 1978; Scurry and Brooks, 1980; Trinkley 1987). The Late Woodland period appears to be a continuation of the Middle Woodland settlement and subsistence pattern of seasonal mobility and short term occupation. Late Woodland sites are characterized by small shell middens and relatively few artifacts and are indicative of a more diffuse subsistence system.

The Southern Appalachian-Mississippian Complex is characterized by the introduction of a complex social structure with ceremonial centers, agriculture and complicated stamped pottery expanding on the basic Woodland complexes preceding it. This cultural complex was still present in the area when Europeans first arrived. Disease introduced by the Europeans are generally accepted as causing the rapid reduction in the numbers of aboriginal population after contact. This brought about a deterioration of their social structure.

Charles Town, the royal name given to what is now known as Charleston, was founded around 1680 after the English moved from their original settlement on Albemarle Point, South Carolina. Initially, Charleston was successful because of a good trade network with the Indians but after 1710 prosperity resulted from the exportation of the valuable South Carolina crops of indigo and rice (Bridenbaugh 1938:469).

Prior to the 1760s the Dockside II tract was marsh lands. Boundary street, now known as Calhoun Street, was the northern boundary of the city. In 1767, Christopher Gadsden began construction of a wharf. Unless Boundary Street has been moved,

the northern extension of Gadsden's Wharf was located within the southern third of the property proposed for Dockside II.

Gadsden finished the wharf in 1773 and by 1774 barrels of rice were noted as being stored there. During the Revolutionary War, Gadsden's Wharf was the location for one of the seven batteries for the city, storage areas were converted to barracks, and portions of the wharf were used to imprison loyalists. In 1795, Gadsden and Alexander Masyck had Boundary Street extended down the northern side of Gadsdens Wharf. The 70-foot wide Boundary Street was extended as a 35-foot wide street and 35-foot wide canal, which was used for loading lumber. Gadsdens Wharf operated as a shipyard from 1846 to 1860.

In 1859, the wharf was purchased by John Marshall, who apparently converted the wharf into a shipyard used to house naval stores. This use continued until 1897. From 1897 to 1911, the area was used by a basket and veneer company. In 1911, title passed to the president of the Southern Fruit Company. In 1914, and continuing through World War II, the Valk and Murdoch Iron Works Company purchased and operated the south side. In 1920, the southern area was used as a dry dock, machine shop and shipyard (Reynolds 1987:12-15).

In 1863, a confederate battery was constructed at the foot of Calhoun Street. The exact location of this battery site is unknown.

The northern section of the Dockside II property remained marsh lands. In 1852, a "bridge wharf" and four piers were constructed within the marsh for use in the lumbering business. That wharf, which extended out from Washington Street, was constructed of wood with a mud fill underneath. Canals were proposed along both the south and north sides of the wharf. Dredging probably resulted in the construction of these canals (Reynolds 1987:8). The wharf was purchased by the Fernoline Chemical Company and a chemical industry operated at this location between 1887-1892 (Reynolds 1987:13). Use of the northern half of the property from 1892 until 1918 is sketchy. The U.S. Coast and Geodetic map of 1918 does not show the northern wharf suggesting that it had been removed (Reynolds 1987:14). By 1939, the entire northern section of the proposed Dockside II property had been dredged leaving only what was the northern extension of the Gadsdens/Marshall Wharf above water. Reynolds (1987) suggests that both the northern and southern sides of the property were used for building ships during World War II.

Investigations

The archeological investigations consisted of surface reconnaissance, surface collections, production of a base map, profiles and subsurface testing. The testing used a backhoe with a 18-inch bucket. Approximately 164 linear meters of trench were dug to an average depth of 2 meters or about 6 1/2 feet. All cultural and natural manifestations were mapped and photographed.

The first trench excavated was located at the eastern end of the park property. The trench was excavated from the concessionaire's boundary to the northern edge of the park property, through the area proposed for the science museum (Figure 1). Excavation of trench 1 (See Figure 2 - at end of report) revealed relatively modern fill deposits throughout the length and depth of the trench. Artifacts noted from the fill deposits included, plastic, wire, pipes, metal, and plastic buckets, railroad type spikes, plywood, miscellaneous metal scraps, Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola bottles, as well as conduit left from a sprinkler system. One specially designed Dr. Pepper bottle recovered was manufactured in the 1930s. The diagnostic feature of the bottle was an embossed clock with hands pointing to 10:00, 2:00, and 4:00. Four separate strata or deposits were recognized.

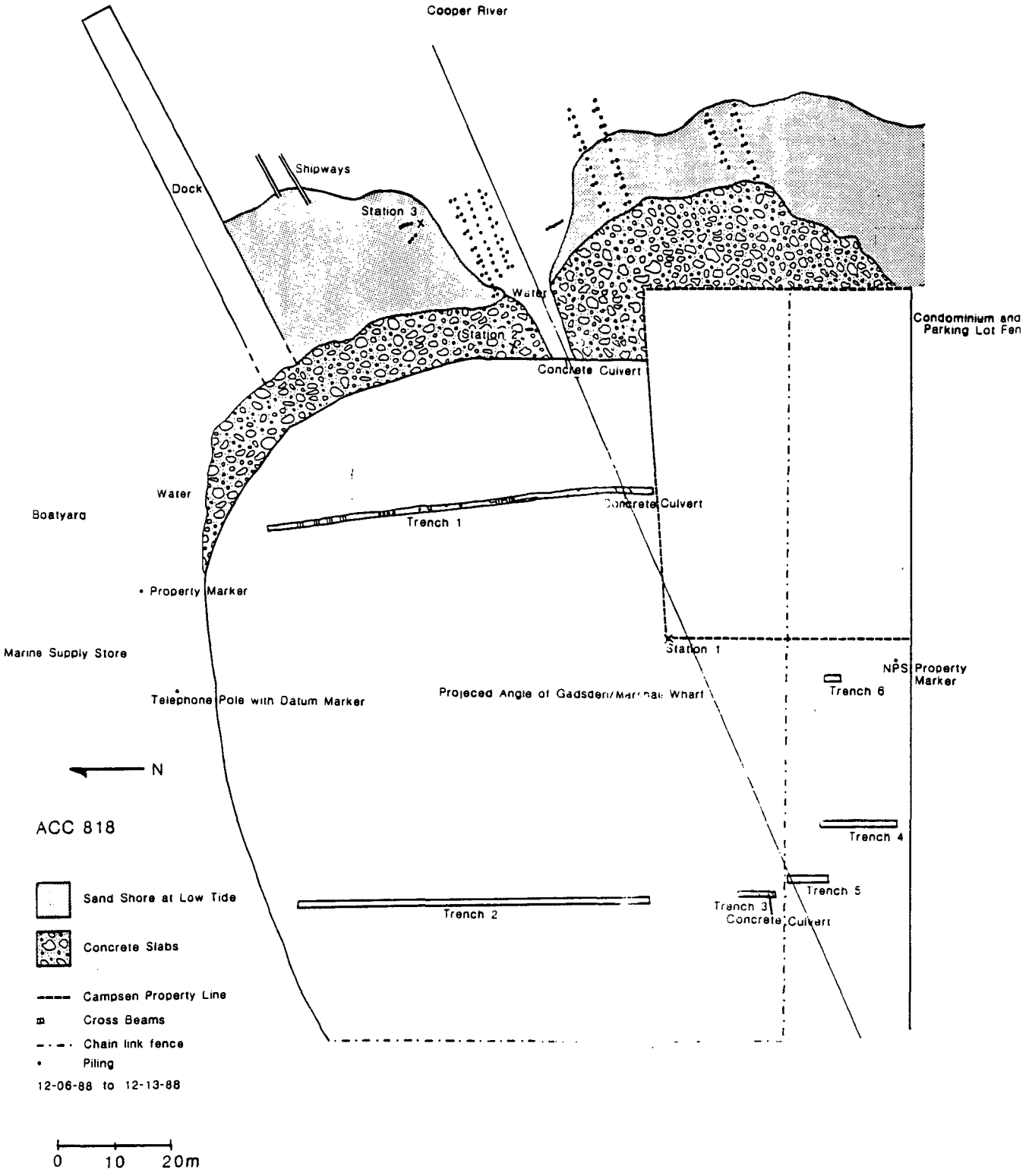



Figure 1. Dockside II Archeological Investigations Base Map.

At the base of the trench (2 meters below surface), a thick lens of yellowish brown (10YR 6/1) swirled sand (probably dredged river bottom) extended up to one meter to 25 cm below the existing grade. Few artifacts were observed in this stratum providing further indication that the deposit was dredged river bottom. The few artifacts that were observed were all recent, no older than 40 years.

Overlying this deposit of dredged fill was a lens of roadbase materials that averaged 40 cm in thickness. The third level was not homogenous and continued in a discontiguous form over most of the trench. It was a lens of various intermixed mottled sandy deposits which were present to just below the surface. These deposits included dark brown sand (10YR 2/1), pinkish white mottled sand (7.5YR 5/6 to 8/2), olive brown sand (2.5YR 6/4), and yellowish brown sand with cobbles (10YR 6/4).

The fourth stratum, a thin layer of pale brown sand and topsoil (10YR 7/4), had been emplaced (See Figure 2 - at end of report) probably in an attempt to level the area for the soccer field.

In the southern end of the trench, the city gravity drain culvert was located at a depth of approximately 2 meters. Just to the

north of the culvert was disturbed area of dark-brown fill material. In one instance, trench excavation extended to a depth of 3.35 meters. Observation of materials was difficult because water inundated the trench and the walls collapsed. However, black muck, probably original soil from when the area was in marsh, was noted just below the 2-meter mark from the surface. A sample of this soil was taken to the Geology Department at Florida State University, and they said "muck is muck and that's what this is."

Trench 1 also contained in situ remains of a wharf system. It extended north from the area disturbed for the gravity drain culvert. Remains of the wharf were represented by scattered pilings of unknown pattern, and by patterned sets of pilings with and without crossbeams. Also noted were scattered planks used in decking the wharf. A northern set of pilings and crossbeams in the trench lined up at the same angle as the existing pier that extends out into the Cooper River (See Figures 1 and 2) and appears to form an extension of it that was covered by fill. The piling and crossbeam construction was identical.

The second trench was placed on the western end of the property and extended from its northern edge to approximately the center

(See Figure 1). Trench 2 contained almost exactly the same fill as trench 1. However, in trench 2 the fill was observable only in the east profile, because the west profile followed more wharf structure along the entire length of the trench (Figure 3). Artifacts recovered from this trench included a cafeteria type coffee cup, a Bromo-Seltzer bottle, and a sign warning of K-9 patrol for the Pinkerton Detective Agency. These indicated a relatively recent date of no more than 40 to 50 years ago.

Trench 3 was placed south of trench 1 in order to try to determine the length of the wharf system (See Figure 1). The wharf was encountered in this trench as was the gravity drain for the city. Placement of wharf beams over the gravity drain suggested that the culvert was in place prior to its construction. The similarity in construction techniques, dimensions of wooden members, and identical metal fasteners used, demonstrated that the remains found in trenches 2 and 3 were related to those in trench 1 and to the existing pier. From these findings, it appears that the wharf system remains intact and interlaces throughout the northern three-quarters of the park's property.

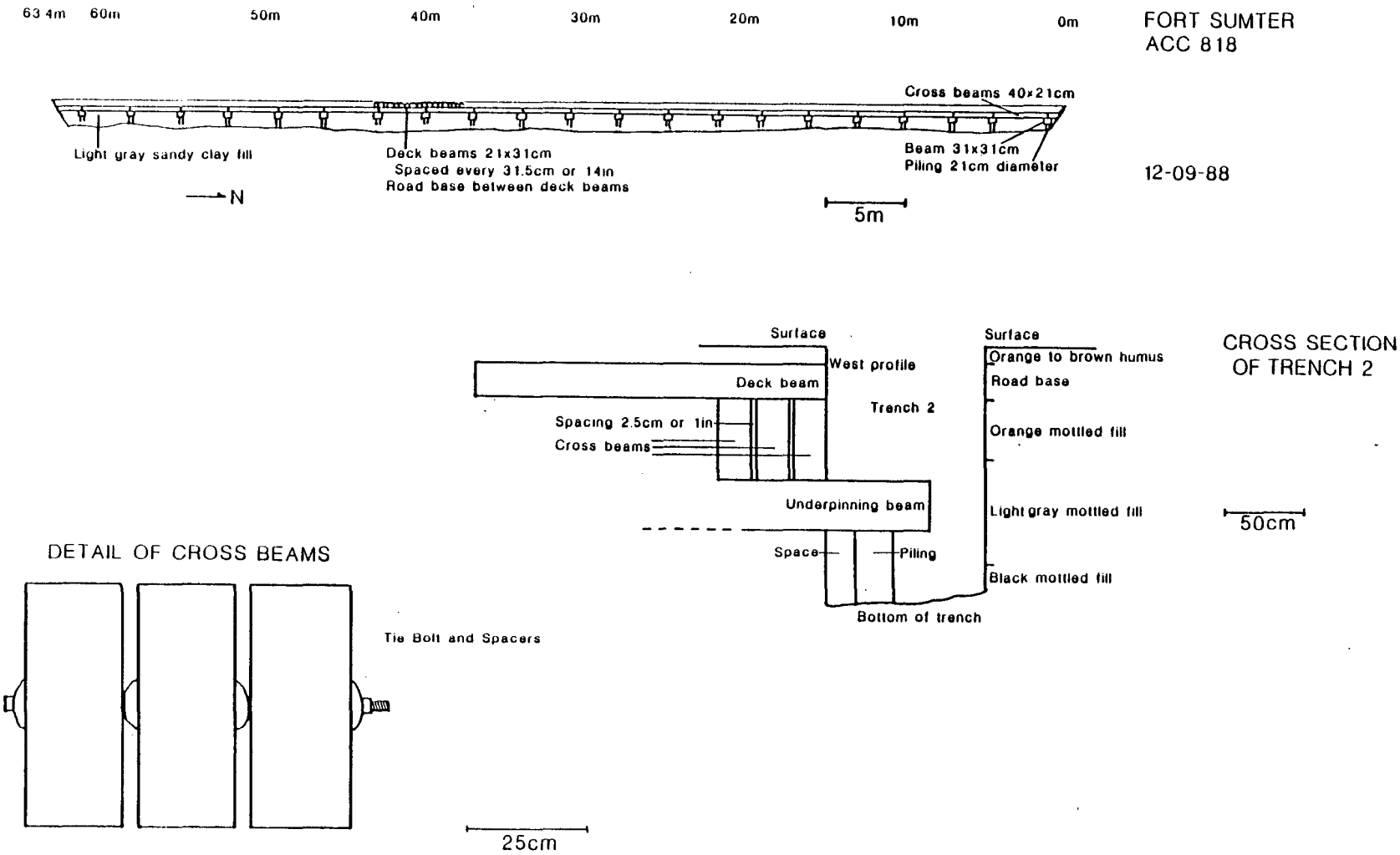



Figure 3. Trench 2.

During the investigations, an historic aerial photograph of the site was given to the SEAC team by a Mr. Cain. He had obtained it from a resident (Mr. Snyder) of the adjacent condominiums (Figure 4). The SEAC team was able to date the picture from the stage of completion of a housing project in the photograph. The housing project (Anson Borough Homes) has a plaque revealing that it was constructed in 1940. The photograph clearly shows the northern three-quarters of the property as inundated with no wharf system present. This information post dated the present wharf to at least World War II. As discussed by Reynolds (1987), the southern half of the property was incorporated with the northern half for wartime shipbuilding operations.

Testing in the southern third of the property began with the placement of trench 4 between the concessionaire's property line and the eastern boundary of the park property (See Figure 1). Trench 4 contained deposits of a different consistency than the previous trenches. The first stratum extended from the surface variably to 25 - 75 cm deep (Figure 6). This deposit was a yellowish brown sandy soil (10YR 5/8). Below this lens was a layer of fill with concrete debris in the upper half mixed with a dark grayish-brown sandy soil (10YR 3/2).

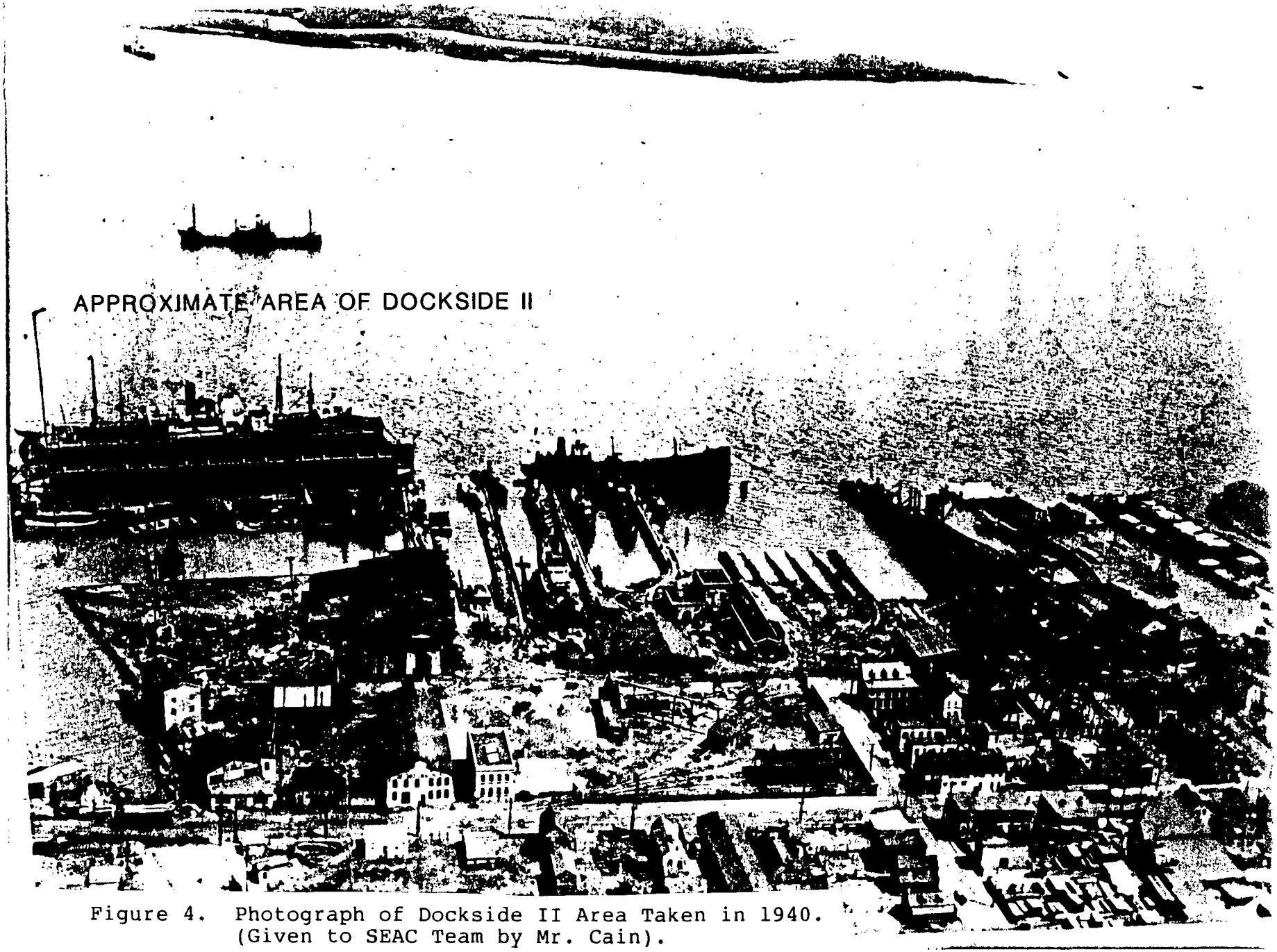
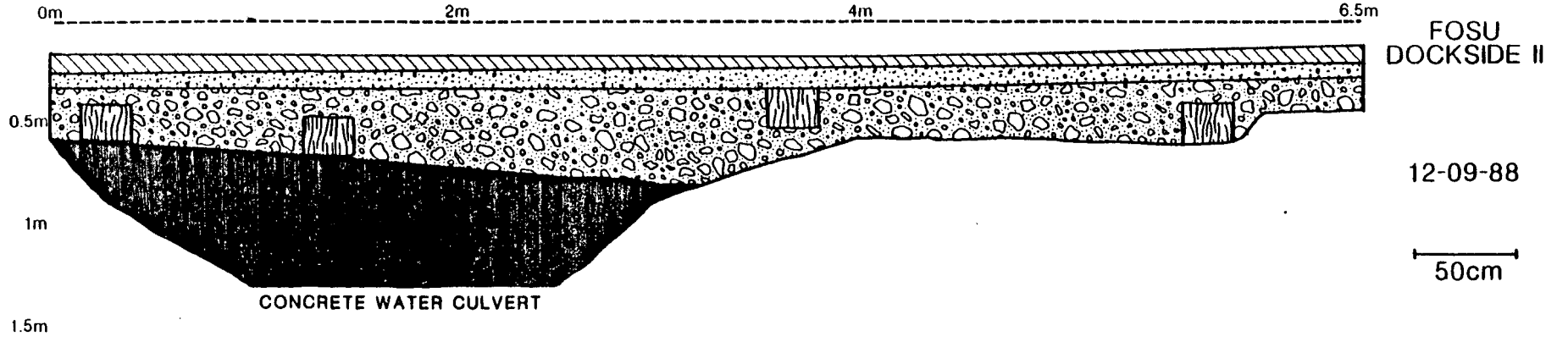



Figure 4. Photograph of Dockside II Area Taken in 1940. (Given to SEAC Team by Mr. Cain).

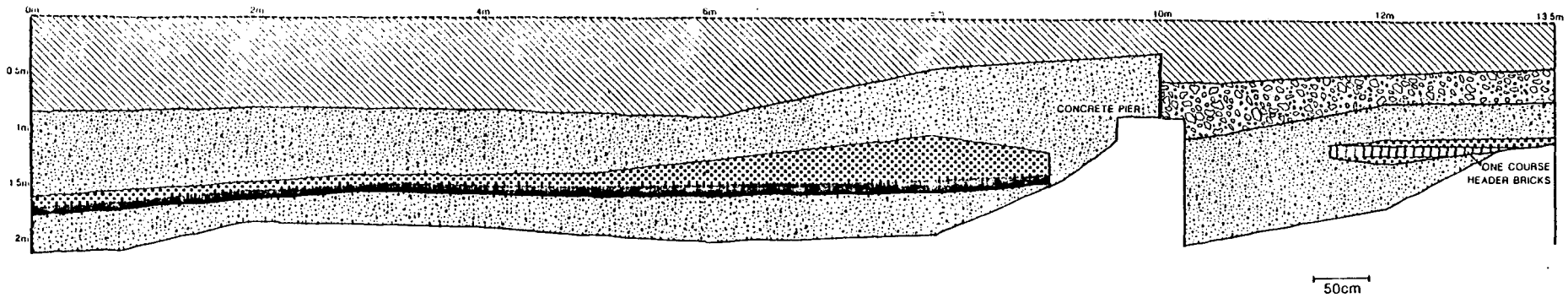



FORT SUMTER

LEGEND

- 2.5YR 7/4 Pale Yellow Sand
- 7.5YR 4/4 Strong Brown and 5YR 5/8 Yellowish Red Sandy Clay with Rocks
- 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Sandy Soil with Abundant Rocks
- 5Y 5/3 Olive to 2.5Y 4/2 Dark Grayish Brown Sand
- Beam End

Figure 5. Trench 3 West Profile.




LEGEND

- 10YR 5/8 Yellowish Brown Sandy Clay
- 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Sandy Soil with Debris
- Brick Fragments, Burnt wood, Ash Layer
- 10YR 2/1 Black Muck
- 10YR 8/2 White Mortar and Brick Fragments
- Concentrated Brick Fragment Layer

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Figure 6. Trench 4 West Profile.

Below the debris was the remains of a brick floor overlain with brick fragments, burned wood and ash. The construction method of the brick floor was undeterminable. Apparently the bricks were low fired commons and had been exposed to water. They were almost deteriorated to a state of clay.

Trench 5 was placed just south of trench 3 (See Figure 1). It extended from the existing fence line south towards the highrise condominiums. In the northern section of the trench, a stretcher course of brick was located one meter below the surface. Just north and adjacent to the brick course was a layer of brick rubble. The articulation of the course of bricks and the rubble layer suggested that this was the northern extension of the building found in trench 4. The rubble was either wall fall or debris left from the construction of the building.

In order to determine if cultural manifestations were present in the southeast section of the park property, a short test trench was excavated just to the west of the concessionaire's property. This test (trench 6) revealed a deteriorated stratum of brick at 1.5 meters below the surface. Within this stratum, one brick was found in the "header position" suggesting a floor.

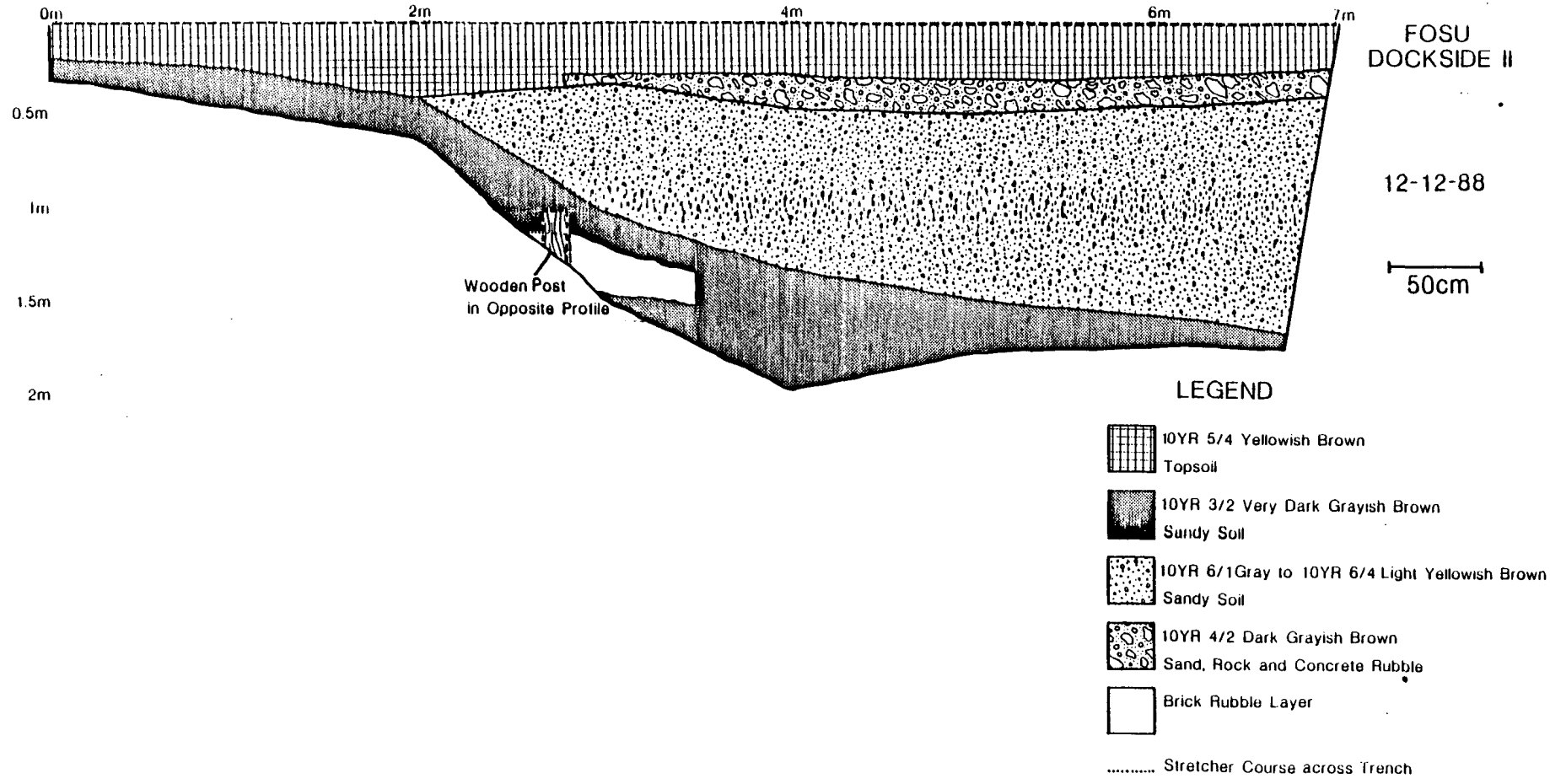
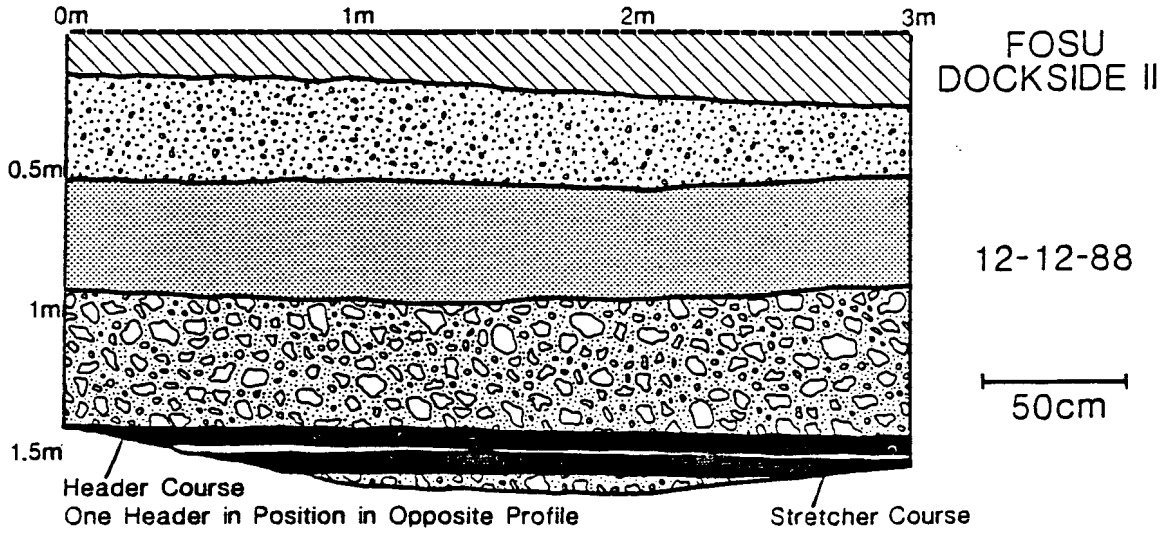



Figure 7. Trench 5 West Profile.




LEGEND

- 10YR 4/6 Dark Yellowish Brown Topsoil
- 2.5YR 2.5/4 Dark Reddish Brown Very Sandy Soil
- 10YR 2/1 Black Soil with Road Gravel
- 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Sandy Soil with burned buiding debris
- Brick Rubble Layer
- Mortar Rubble Layer

Figure 8. Trench 6 West Profile.

Below this stratum was found a thin lens of mortar followed by a "stretcher course" of brick. As in trenches 4 and 5, burned wood, brick, and ash were found above the brick floor. These remains began at approximately one meter depth below the surface.

Artifacts recovered in the burned stratum of burned wood, brick, and ash dated from the mid- to late-nineteenth century. From trench 4, two sherds of transfer-printed whiteware which dates between 1820 and 1900, and one sherd of pearlware which was popular between 1820 and 1840 were recovered. The neck of a blue-green bottle, manufactured in a manner typical of the mid- to late-nineteenth century, was also recovered. In trench 5, within the burned wood, brick, and ash strata, a sherd of plain whiteware and one fragment of green-glazed stoneware, along with other artifacts commonly associated with the second half of the nineteenth century, were recovered.

In all three of the trenches that were excavated on the southern half of the park property, the smell of turpentine was overwhelming. Reynolds (1967) states that the Marshall/Gadsdens Wharf, between 1860 - 1897, was active in the naval stores business, particularly in rosin and turpentine. An 1884 Sanborn fire insurance map of the site area shows a "Lattice Shed -

Spirits of Turpentine Storage" in the area as trenches 4, 5, and 6 (Reynolds, 1986 Map #36; Figure 9).

A surface reconnaissance of the entire Dockside II property was conducted. Historic materials were recovered at low tide along the mud flats, but only between the gravity drain and the southern edge of the property. A significant number of historic ceramics and bottles dating primarily from the eighteenth and nineteenth century were collected in this area (Figure 10). The presence of artifacts, in this area, spanning an extensive period of time, is not surprising. Contemporary maps (Reynolds 1987) and the 1940 aerial photograph (See Figure 4) demonstrate that the northern side of Gadsden/Marshall Wharf has always extended away from Calhoun Street at the same angle. The SEAC archeologists projected where the wharf transected the Dockside II property. It basically follows the existing gravity drain (See Figure 1). The historic loss or disposal of materials from the northeastern edge of this wharf was probably common, and probably explains why artifacts are present in this area in such significant numbers.

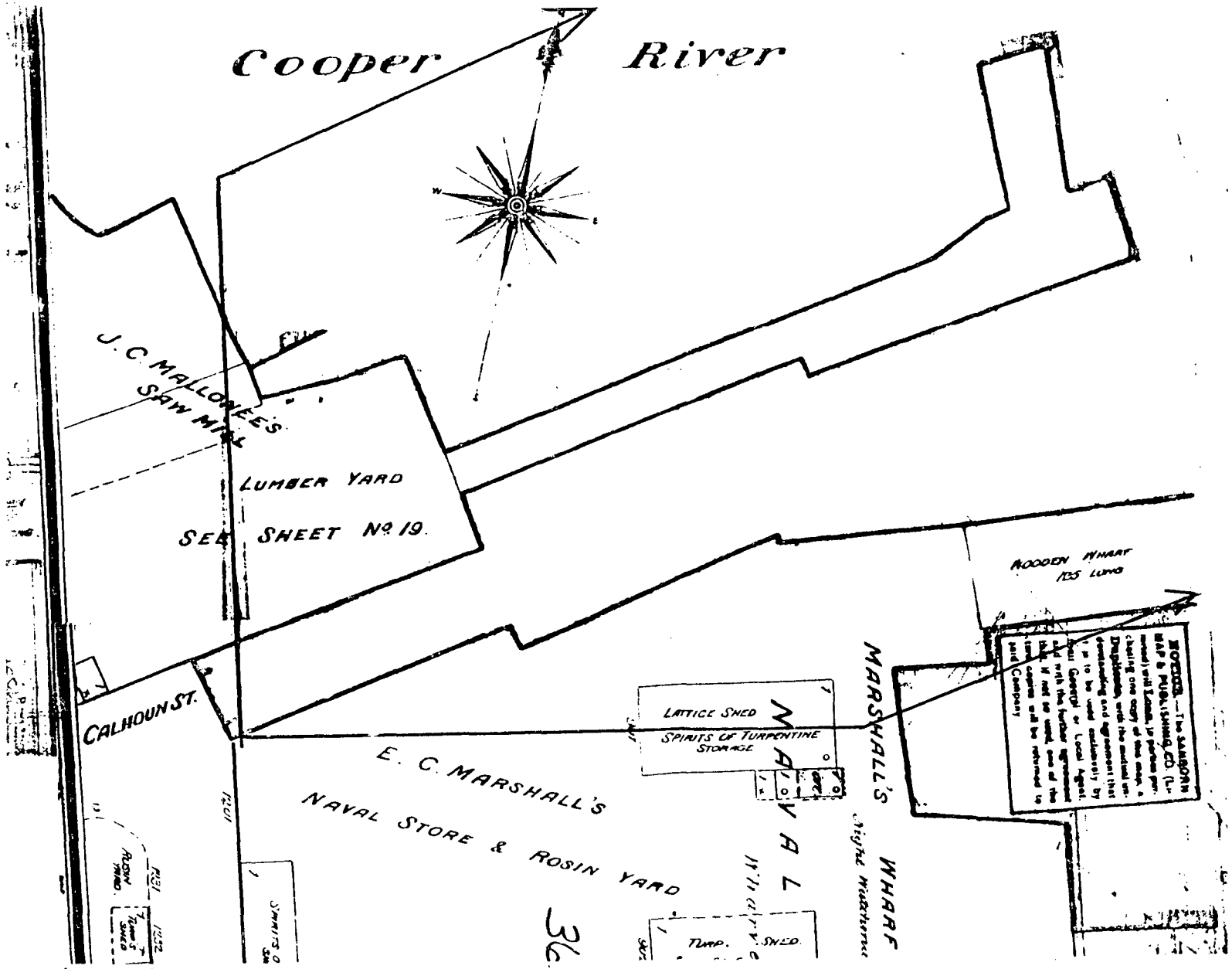



Figure 9. May 1884 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Dockside II Area. (Taken fron Reynolds, 1987 Map # 36).

| No. of Sherd Recovered | Artifact Type | Temporal Range |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | Blue edged pearlware | 1820-1830 |
| 12 | Transfer print pearlware | 1795-1840 |
| 16 | Undecorated pearlware | 1780-1830 |
| 3 | Gaudy Dutch | 1820-1840 |
| 1 | Wormy finger-painted pearl ware | 1790-1820 |
| 1 | Hand-painted polychrome pearlware | 1780-1820 |
| 3 | Flow blue whiteware | 1830-1880 |
| 7 | Transfer print whiteware | 1820-present |
| 5 | Undecorated whiteware | 1820-present |
| 1 | Plain white delftware | 1640-1820 |
| 20 | UID refined earthenware | |
| 13 | Porcelain | 1500-present |
| 3 | Ginger beer bottle | 1820-1900 |
| 4 | Lead-glazed stoneware | 1700-1900 |
| 3 | Salt-glazed stoneware | 1700-1900 |
| 2 | Ironstone | 1813-1900 |
| 6 | Dark green bottle glass | 1500-1899 |
| 1 | Applied lip bottle neck | 1850-1870 |
| 2 | Molded bottle lips | 1800-present |
| 1 | Amber glass lip | 1500-present |

FIGURE 10: SURFACE COLLECTION FROM MUD FLATS ALONG COOPER RIVER (DOCKSIDE II).

## Conclusions

Trenches 1, 2, and 3 revealed the presence of fill deposits that date between 1930 - 1940 and pilings and planking from the same period. The pilings were probably supports for a wharf system for shipbuilding activities during World War II.

Trenches 4, 5, and 6 were in a location that produced an odor and artifact assemblage (late nineteenth century) that appears to be the remains of a turpentine shed. Historic records indicate such a structure was present on the wharf from 1860 to 1897. Surface reconnaissance located historic artifacts on the mud flats along the southeast end of the Dockside II property. They were probably associated with trash disposal and accidental loss from the northeast end of the Gadsden/Marshall Wharf.

The data produced by this testing program does not appear to support a determination of eligibility for the National Register for this site. Therefore, we do not expect that the Dockside II construction will have an effect on Register-eligible cultural resources.

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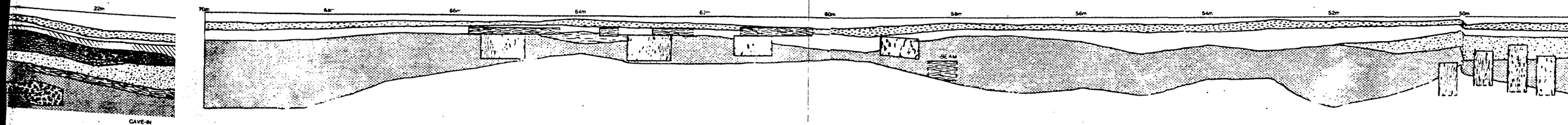
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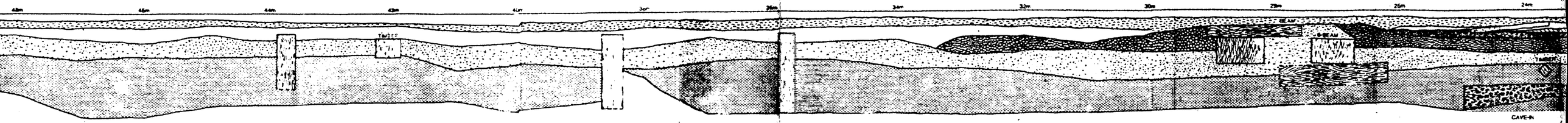
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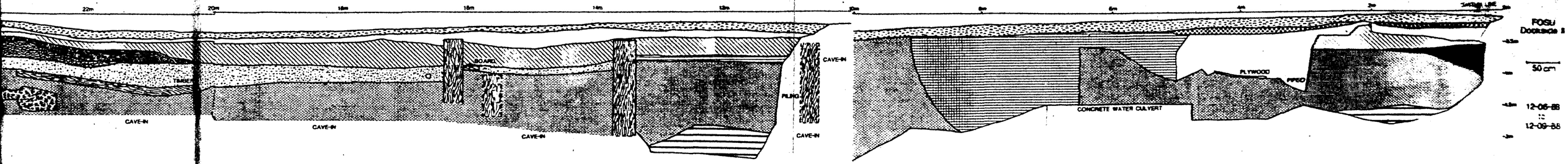


LEGEND

- 10YR 8/2 Light Brownish Gray Sandy Clay
- 10YR 6/1 Gray to 10YR 8/2 Light Yellowish Brown Stained Sand
- 5YR 2/1 Black Sandy Dirt with Road Gravel
- 7.5YR 5/6 Strong Brown to 7.5YR 8/2 Pinkish White Mottled Sand
- 10YR 3/3 Dark Brown Mottled Sandy Soil
- 2.5YR 3/6 Dark Red Clay
- 10YR 7/4 Very Pale Brown Sand and Topsoil
- 10YR 2/1 Black Fill Dirt
- 5YR 4/6 Yellowish Red Decomposed Metal
- 10YR 2/1 Black Road Base
- 2.5Y 4/4 Olive Brown Sand
- 10YR 6/4 Light Yellowish Brown Cobbles and Sand
- 10YR 2/2 VeryDark Brown Sand
- 10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow to 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Mottled Rocks in Sandy Clay
- Wood

——— Objects in Opposite Profile

——— Possible Continuation

——— Removed by Backhoe

Figure 2. Trench 1 East Profile.